



R E P R E S E N T A T I V E

DAN

KRISTIANSEN

2008 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW



YOUR CONCERNS, MY COMMITMENT, OUR RESULTS

- ✓ Highway 2 gets additional safety funding
- ✓ Taxpayers defended against a misguided tax hike
- ✓ More studies on health care reform
- ✓ Teachers get cost-of-living increase
- ✓ More protections against sex offenders
- ✓ Supplemental operating budget presents concerns
- ✓ Local teens work in Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE

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39th Legislative District

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OUR RESULTS**



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Spring 2008

Dear friends,

The 60-day session of the 2008 Legislature adjourned March 13, and it's good to be back home and active in the 39th District. Although it's been nearly two months since the Legislature was in session, in June most of the bills that passed will become law.

Earlier this year, I mailed a newsletter to many of our 39th District residents entitled "Your concerns, my commitment." If you didn't receive a copy, you may download it from my Web site at: <http://www.housepublicans.wa.gov/Kristiansen/Commitment.pdf>. It outlined issues and goals of the 2008 session that citizens told me are important to them.

Now that the session is behind us, it's a good time to review the results of those top issues in this newsletter.

I want to thank everyone who contacted my office and participated in the legislative process. Many of you came to Olympia to testify, sent written testimony, e-mailed my office, called or sent letters regarding issues. Your input was very helpful and made a tremendous difference. I also encourage you to continue your communication with me. My Olympia office remains open throughout the year and I am continuing to work for you.

If you would like more information about legislation discussed in this newsletter, visit the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.leg.wa.gov> or my home page at: <http://www.housepublicans.wa.gov/Kristiansen>.

It is an honor to serve you!

Sincerely,

Rep. Dan Kristiansen



REPRESENTATIVE DAN KRISTIANSEN

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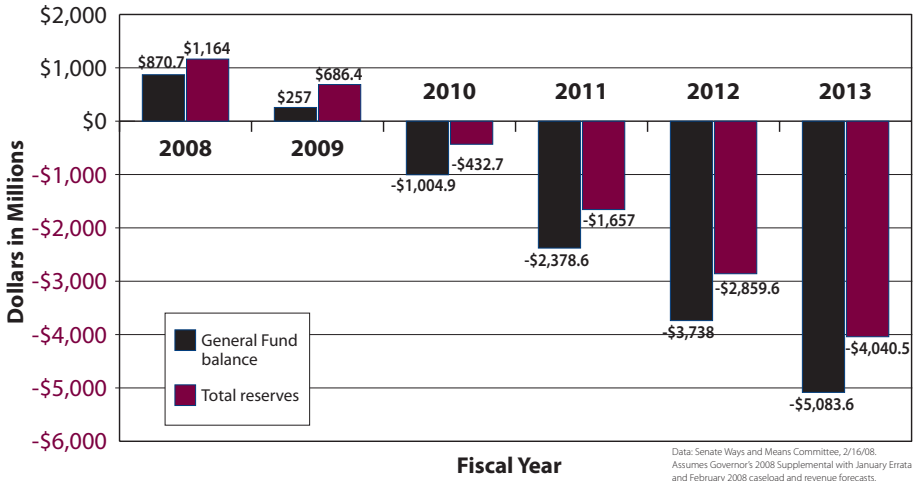
BUDGET AND TAXES

✓ PROTECTING TAXPAYERS

The supplemental budget is supposed to make corrections in the two-year operating budget the Legislature approved last year, such as addressing unanticipated costs. Unfortunately, the supplemental operating budget approved this year increases spending by \$291 million. While revenues have increased 6 percent, spending has increased by more than 15 percent. Everyone knows you cannot spend more money than you take in. At the current rate of spending, the Senate Ways and Means Committee predicts Washington will face deep budget deficits in the coming years.

We need to protect taxpayers by cutting spending and getting back to a Priorities of Government model for state budgeting -- a successful approach that was embraced by Gov. Locke and the Legislature in 2003, but was unfortunately abandoned.

According to a Senate Ways and Means Committee analysis,
a large state surplus turns into a deep deficit within a few years.



✓ BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

I was pleased that the Legislature approved Senate Bill 6818. This is a measure I sponsored in the House that provides transparency in budgeting by allowing the public to see on a Web site how their money is spent.

✓ PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

I had hoped, following the November special session in which the 1 percent levy limit was restored, that the momentum for further property tax relief would continue into the 2008 session. Unfortunately, the kickoff for property tax reductions turned out to be a punt. Despite our efforts for major property tax relief, we were only able to claim small victories.

Senate Bill 5256 expands property tax exemptions and deferrals for veterans with services-connected disabilities. A partial fix was also approved to an inadvertent error in a law passed by the 2007 Legislature that made voter-approved multi-year levy lid lifts permanent. Senate Bill 6641 makes future lid lifts temporary unless otherwise stated on the ballot. Unfortunately, it did not address those lid lifts that have passed since last July, meaning some property owners may be stuck with permanent property tax increases.

We need to address the problem of out-of-sight property taxes literally forcing people out of their homes.

✓ FIGHTING A MISGUIDED TAX HIKE

My phone lines lit up and e-mail box filled when people got word of Senate Bill 6900. This measure would have required car and truck owners to pay an annual emissions fee based on the size of the vehicle's engine, regardless of fuel efficiency. This tax could cost drivers anywhere from \$70 to \$600 a year. Fortunately, the measure died. However, its sponsor vows to bring the measure back next year. We will need to remain vigilant against this and other misguided tax hikes.



ENGINE SIZE (LITERS)	TAX
Up to 1.9	\$0
2.0 - 2.9	\$70
3.0 - 3.9	\$225
4.0 - 4.9	\$275
5.0 - 5.9	\$325
6.0 - 7.9	\$400
8.0 or over	\$600

EDUCATION

✓ FUNDING THE FUNDAMENTALS

The operating budget includes \$57 million to provide a 4.4 percent raise for public school employees and some community college workers in the 2008-09 school year. All-day kindergarten was expanded for low-income areas of the state.



Senate Bill 6377 creates a grant program to expand career and technical education programs to prepare students for degrees or apprenticeships. It's expected this legislation would help lower a 30 percent school drop-out rate. The capital budget contains \$5.1 million to expand skills centers in Washington. The Legislature also provided \$18 million in learning assistance funds to help struggling students at risk of not graduating.



REP. DAN KRISTIANSEN DISCUSSES LEGISLATIVE
ISSUES WITH A CONSTITUENT.

TRANSPORTATION

✓ MAKING HIGHWAY 2 SAFE

We made significant progress in calling attention to the safety problems on Highway 2, which led to additional funding to fix sections of this dangerous corridor where 48 people have died since 1999.

I introduced legislation to direct a portion of money from the state's rental car tax, vehicle license plate replacement fees and driver's license fees, into a Special Safety Corridor Account. The revenue raised through these sources would have allowed bonding of \$250 million for Highway 2 improvements. It also would have provided additional funds for Highway 20 through the Sedro-Woolley area.

Families from throughout the Highway 2 - Snohomish County corridor came to Olympia to testify in favor of my legislation. Their stories impacted lawmakers and, although my bills did not advance, we got our foot in the door to negotiate for funding.

The final transportation budget carries forward \$3.9 million from last year for rumble strips, and an additional \$10 million to begin addressing some of the most dangerous sections of Highway 2. It's a small, but good start toward saving lives.



CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY

✓ FAMILIES BEFORE FELONS

The Legislature approved House Bill 2713, a measure I co-sponsored that adds stalking, soliciting a prostitute and communicating with a minor for immoral purposes to the list of crimes for which criminals must submit a DNA sample to authorities.

Police departments will receive additional funding to cover the cost of in-person visits by officers seeking to verify that sex offenders are living where they say they are. Authorities will collect DNA samples from offenders if they are not already on file. More than \$1.5 million has been provided to expand the use of GPS (global positioning system) devices to track movements of sex offenders under community supervision.

The governor's proposal to set up sobriety checkpoints died, thankfully. Unfortunately, so did my proposal, House Bill 1471, which would have eliminated the ability to use "I was too drunk to know what I was doing" as a criminal defense. I will continue to pursue this measure.

HEALTH CARE

✓ GIVING HEALTH CARE BACK TO FAMILIES

Since 2000, 194 health care bills have passed, and what do we have to show for it? Increased costs and **less** access to health care!

This year, it was disappointing little was done to increase access to health care, even though more than 90 bills were introduced. I co-sponsored House Bill 1539, that would have allowed health insurers to offer affordable options for small business owners, expanding families' access to health care. Unfortunately, that legislation was set aside in favor of Senate Bill 6333, which establishes a task force to seek public input on several health care reform proposals. Since 2005, 15 other health-care studies have been conducted, costing taxpayers several million dollars. When will the Legislature quit studying this issue and take action on the good ideas that have come from the previous studies that we have already paid for?



LOCAL TEENS SERVE AS PAGES

Many thanks to Cassie and Jessica who served as my legislative pages in the House of Representatives this year. Paging presents students with a unique educational opportunity to participate in the legislative process. Their duties vary from ceremonial tasks, such as presenting the flags, to operational chores like distributing amendments during legislative sessions. For more information, go online to: www.leg.wa.gov/House/PageInternProgram.



Cassie



Jessica